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25X1CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

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MEMORANDUMCuban Reactions to US Policy

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Key Judgments

We believe the chances are minimal (10 percent at most) that punitive US military moves--blockade or interdiction of Cuban sea and air traffic--would produce Cuban submission to demands that involved Castro's revolutionary principles.

Both the instincts of the Cuban leadership and Castro's reasoned calculations would lead the regime to resist and, further, to counterattack.

- Castro is unencumbered by institutional or personal restraining influences and, despite domestic discontent within Cuba, he could count on virtually the entire populace to rally patriotically in the face of an outside threat.
- Castro has many levers with which to internationalize a confrontation, including propaganda, recourse to international forums, command of important commercial international airspace, and the wherewithal to retaliate physically against US persons and interests abroad.
- Castro would not expect the US to be able to garner much support, even from governments not well disposed toward Cuba, for such a drastic action as a blockade.
- In these circumstances, Castro would estimate that he could withstand a blockade longer than the US could maintain it.
- Castro might, however, be responsive to a combination of the threat of force and positive incentives under certain conditions.

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- Any bilateral dialogue would have to be secret so that Castro could appear to be acting voluntarily.
- Any agreement to pull troops out of Africa or soft-pedal subversion would have to take the form of a verbal understanding involving limited self-imposed restrictions on Cuba's part.

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